

Course Syllabus - History 600

American Capitalism / Prof. Dunlavy

Course mechanics

Course name

Advanced Seminar in History: American Capitalism

Course number

448-600-004

Day/time/location

Thursdays, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Pre-requisites

Instructor authorization is required. History majors must take one History 600 seminar to fulfill the requirements of the major. While registration in this course is not limited to History majors, priority will be given to majors as well as to students who have taken courses that provide good background for the history of American corporations (e.g., History 247, History 465- 466).

Prof. Dunlavy's office hours

TBA

Course description

Capstone seminar

This seminar offers the History major a "capstone" experience with hands-on research -- that is, an experience designed to put the finishing touches on your major. Over the course of the semester you will produce a 20- to 25- page paper that is **based on primary sources** and makes **an original contribution** to historical knowledge. Because of its intensive nature, you should plan to make this seminar the focal point of your semester and to devote lots of time to it. If the research topic that you develop is intellectually gripping and challenging, it will be a wonderful experience.

Your research topic

Corporations of all kinds -- charitable (benevolent), educational, and forprofit (business) -- have been an increasingly prominent feature of American history since the Revolution. Yet many aspects of their history remain unexplored. This seminar offers you an opportunity to contribute to historical knowledge about corporations. You may focus your research on any period in American history and on any aspect of the history of corporations -- social, political, economic. We will do a small amount of reading in common on the history of corporations, but mostly you will read primary and secondary sources that you have selected yourself to illuminate your own research topic. **Fair warning:** developing a viable and interesting research topic is often the most difficult, time-consuming part of the research process!

Rhythm of the semester

During the first few weeks of the semester, we will develop a common foundation of knowledge of several kinds -- about the history of corporations, about the nuts-and-bolts of the research process, and about the wealth of research materials available on campus and on the web. As you begin to firm up your paper topics, the seminar will switch modes and begin to function like a workshop in which each student presents an aspect of her/his research and learns to critique the other students' work.